

# *Dawn* **BUCKINGHAM**

## **CAPITOL REPORT 2019**

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**DAWN BUCKINGHAM**  
STATE SENATOR

COMMITTEES:  
NOMINATIONS, CHAIR  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
HIGHER EDUCATION

*Dear friends,*

*It is an honor and privilege to serve you as the State Senator for District 24 in the Texas Senate. I appreciate your support and input during the 86th legislative session, and I am proud to report on the accomplishments the legislature achieved on your behalf.*

*This session was all about staying true to our Texas roots. We took action in key areas you sent us here to address, including improving public education, keeping taxes low, strengthening border security, and defending life.*

*By standing strong with Governor Greg Abbott, Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick, my colleagues in the Texas Senate, and grassroots leaders from across Texas, we completed a bold agenda that will shape Texas for years to come. Working together, we delivered property tax relief, increased funding for public schools, and gave teachers a pay raise – without raising taxes!*

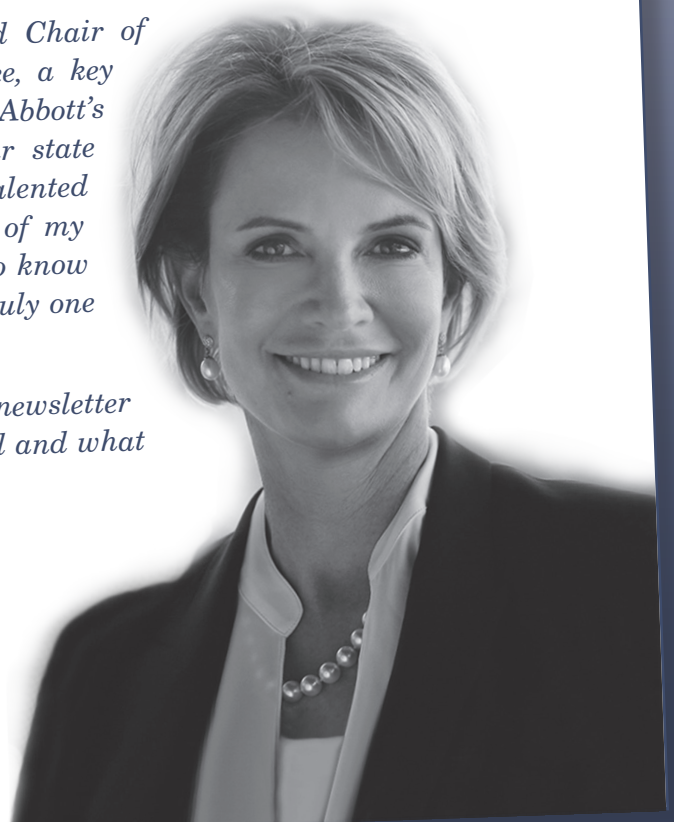
*While the legislature is in session for just 140 days every other year, many of our key initiatives begin long before lawmakers return to Austin in January. For example, following my first session, I was honored to be named to the Sunset Advisory Commission for a second time. In fact, I am the first legislator to ever be named to the Sunset Commission after previously serving as a public member. This historic appointment allowed me to apply my “less is more” approach to government to the review of several key state agencies.*

*I was also honored this session to be named Chair of the prestigious Senate Nominations Committee, a key position responsible for the review of Governor Abbott’s appointees to agencies and boards across our state government. Texas is blessed to have so many talented individuals willing to serve, including many of my constituents from Senate District 24. Getting to know so many of the brightest minds in Texas was truly one of the highlights of my session.*

*But that’s not all. I invite you to look inside this newsletter for more information on what we accomplished and what we’re still working on – for you!*

*Sincerely,*

*Dawn Buckingham, MD*



## ABOUT SENATOR DAWN BUCKINGHAM, MD

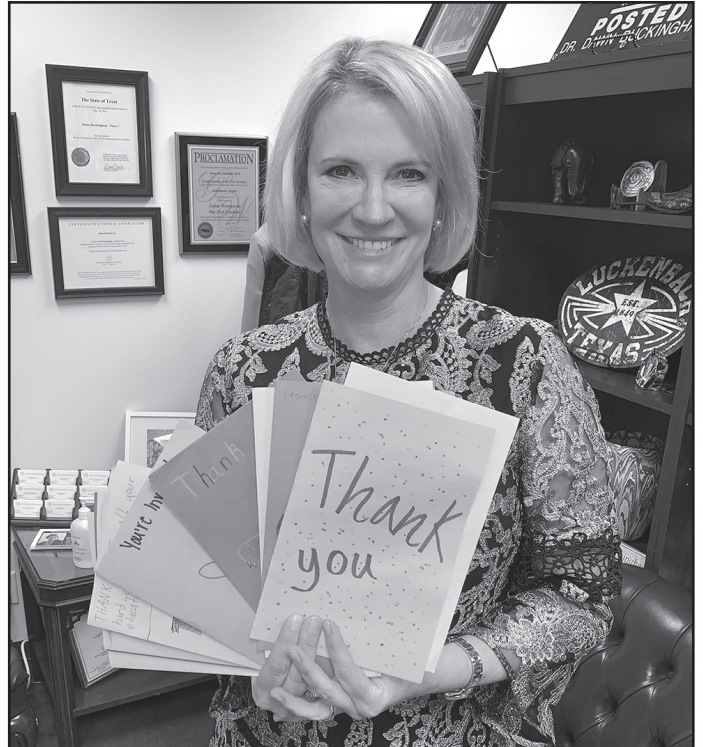
Dawn Buckingham is a small business owner who believes the best approach to government is “less is more.” As a doctor, she has witnessed firsthand how government often interferes, rather than enhances, an individual’s or a business’ success.

Dawn Buckingham’s forefathers were among the first settlers to Texas seven generations ago, and that tough, independent, pioneer spirit is deeply rooted in her personality. Dawn spent her early years growing up on Fox Run Farm until the family moved to Austin. While she graduated from Westlake High School, Dawn remains a country girl at heart as an avid hunter and outdoorswoman. Her commitment to service began early, serving as a volunteer firefighter, and she is a graduate of the A&M Fire School.

Dawn lived at home and worked two jobs to pay for college at UT-Austin, graduating Magna Cum Laude and debt-free. It was during college that Dawn met the love of her life and husband of 28 years, Ed Buckingham. Dawn and Ed both received their medical degrees from the Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and they have two children. Her commitment to service and recognition for her work has allowed her to hold leadership positions in local, state, and national organizations.

### Senator Buckingham by the numbers:

- 1st:** Person to serve as a legislator on Sunset Advisory Commission after previously serving as a public member
- 4:** Key Senate Committee assignments: Nominations (Chair), Criminal Justice, Health and Human Services, and Higher Education
- 17:** Counties in Senate District 24
- 55:** Pieces of legislation passed into law and signed by Governor Abbott in 2019



*Senator Buckingham fights to make sure the voice of rural Texas is heard in the Texas legislature and that issues of importance to Senate District 24 are not overshadowed by urban areas.*

## EDUCATION

We have always prioritized education in Texas, and that is exactly what we did this session. House Bill 3 is landmark legislation that will transform education in Texas. As a former school board member and a parent whose children went to public school, I will always fight for our public schools. In addition to the countless reforms in this bill, I want to stress three critical components:

- Every single school district in Texas will receive an increase in per student funding from the state, with an average increase of 20 percent,
- Teachers, librarians, nurses, and counselors will receive an average increase of more than \$4,200 in total compensation, and
- We significantly reformed the broken recapture or “Robin Hood” system.

Our state financial resources are precious, but so are our students and those who educate them, and I was proud to support this prioritization in funding.

## TAXES

As a fiscal conservative who believes government must live within its means I worked hard to make sure we didn’t raise taxes. We also took action to prevent having an income tax in Texas by passing House Joint Resolution 38, which voters will get to weigh in on in November. If approved, this amendment to the Texas Constitution will ban the imposition of a state income tax on individuals and businesses in Texas.



*Senator Buckingham is the first woman to represent Senate District 24.*



# THE CAPITOL REPORT

We also passed Senate Bill 2 which will allow you to keep more of your money. Everyone knows property taxes are out of control and Senate Bill 2 will make serious reforms that will save taxpayers more than \$2.6 billion over the next five years by giving you more of a say when local governments attempt to raise your taxes beyond tighter limits. Those limits are 3.5 percent for cities and counties with populations of more than 30,000 and \$500,000 for cities and counties with populations under 30,000. I will always fight for you against higher taxes because I believe the government exists to serve you, not the other way around. In other words, it's your money!

## BORDER

On the issue of public safety I am proud that our state budget prioritized having strong national security. In both of the sessions I have served as your State Senator, the state budget has dedicated nearly \$1 billion to fund DPS and the National Guard to help secure the border.

We have added boats and planes to detect and deter cartels that try to smuggle people and drugs into Texas. Securing our border is truly an issue of life or death, and without a secure border, we do not have a nation.



*As a strong supporter of border security, Senator Buckingham believes an unsecure border is the biggest threat to Texas' security and prosperity.*

## LIFE

I am proud to be a pro-life champion for you in the Texas Senate. We have a duty to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

That is why I was proud to co-author several pro-life bills since joining the Senate, including banning the use of taxpayer dollars to support abortion providers, adding protections to infants who survive abortion with the Texas Born Alive Infant Protection Act, increasing criminal penalties for buying



*Senator Buckingham focuses her attention on cutting government, holding the line on state spending, reforming health care and standing up for our brave veterans.*

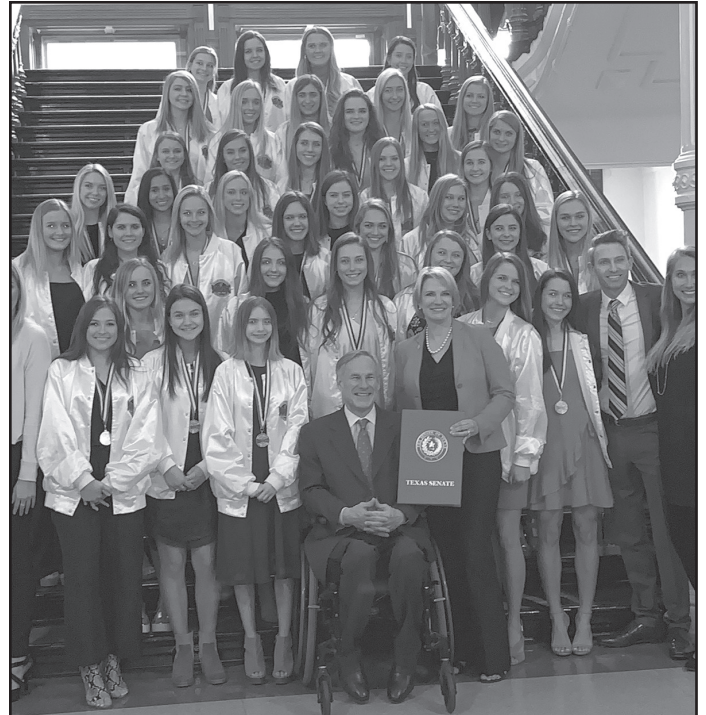
or selling human fetal tissue, and banning partial-birth abortion in Texas.

## OTHER KEY LEGISLATION

- Senate Bill 7 establishes the framework for providing nearly \$2 billion through the Texas Infrastructure Resilience Fund as matching funds available to those communities hardest hit by Hurricane Harvey. It also will provide funding through the Flood Infrastructure Fund for statewide infrastructure projects to mitigate future flooding events.
- Senate Bill 12, the Retired Teacher Security Act, makes the Teacher Retirement System pension fund financially healthy and also gives retired teachers a one-time "13th check" of \$2,000, which will likely be distributed this Fall.
- Senate Bill 14 empowers the state's electric cooperatives to use existing infrastructure to deploy broadband across their service areas, which includes the majority of Senate District 24 and rural Texas. Broadband internet is an essential tool for economic development, telemedicine, and education, but in many parts of the state, especially rural Texas, access to reliable broadband is limited at best.
- Senate Bill 18 protects free speech on college campuses and ensures that outdoor areas of college campuses are deemed "public forums" and creates disciplinary sanctions for students who interfere with free speech activities on campus.
- Senate Bill 25 will save taxpayers, students, and parents money by ensuring that courses at technical institutes or community and junior colleges can easily transfer and count toward a degree at

a four-year university. The bill requires colleges to more clearly identify which course credits would or would not transfer.

- Senate Bill 26 provides a dedicated source of funding to support state and local parks and state historic sites across the state. Our state's heritage lives on through our parks and historical sites, and they must be preserved for future generations.
- Senate Bill 37 eliminates the provisions in statute requiring state agencies to deny or revoke occupational licenses from individuals who have defaulted on student loans. Without a license, these individuals are unable to work in their chosen profession, which can hinder their ability to pay off existing debt.
- Senate Bill 170 helps address the growing rural hospital closure crisis by ensuring rural hospitals are fully reimbursed for allowable costs through Medicaid.
- Senate Bill 282, also known as the Salado Bill, will provide relief to communities impacted by transportation delays by preventing the redistribution of penalties to unrelated projects or transportation districts elsewhere in Texas. This bill will require TxDOT to allocate any financial penalties received to additional projects in the transportation district where the delay was located, assuring residents of impacted areas that resources made available because of delay in their community will stay in their community.
- Senate Bill 1189 prohibits intentionally misleading advertisements for legal services in order to protect vulnerable Texans against potential health risks associated with the false information presented in these advertisements. This bill would increase advertisement disclosure requirements, prohibit the use of intentionally misleading or manipulative information, and create legal penalties to hold those who violate the bill's provisions accountable.
- Senate Bill 1978, known as the Save Chick-Fil-A bill, protects the religious liberty of businesses and individuals against any discrimination by a government or public entity. The measure prohibits the government from taking "adverse action" against any individuals or businesses based on membership, support or donations to religious groups.
- House Bill 1177 is a pro-second amendment bill that allows constitutional carry during natural disasters. This bill protects citizens



*Senator Buckingham worked with Governor Greg Abbott and other state leaders to deliver transformational education reform and provide teacher pay raises.*

from being charged with a crime for carrying a handgun without a license while evacuating from an area during a declared state or local disaster, or while returning to that area. Texans who are forced to leave their homes following a disaster should not have to risk being charged with a crime for bringing with them a firearm for protection without a license to carry.

- Senate Bill 1200 exempts military spouses from needing to obtain certain occupational licenses if the spouse holds a license from a state with substantially similar licensure requirements and is in good standing in that state for a period of three years.
- House Bill 1545, the TABC Sunset bill, brings much-needed modernization to the state's alcoholic beverage industry regulations. The bill includes my amendment to allow craft breweries to sell Beer-to-Go, similar to an existing authority granted to wineries, distilleries, and brewpubs. Allowing the sale of beer directly to consumers will help Texas craft brewers grow their small businesses, create jobs, and benefit local economies across the state.
- House Bill 2536 is a drug-pricing transparency bill that aims to establish reporting requirements for pharmaceutical drug manufacturers, health plans, and pharmacy benefit managers. This bill aligns with an executive order by President Donald Trump and requires the state to be notified if the wholesale price of a drug increased more than 10 percent in a year, or more than 40 percent over five years.





## 86TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ENACTED LEGISLATION AUTHORED OR SPONSORED BY SENATOR DAWN BUCKINGHAM, MD

**SB 282** seeks to provide relief to communities impacted by transportation delays by preventing the redistribution of penalties to unrelated projects or transportation districts elsewhere in Texas.

**SB 312\***, the Beer-To-Go Bill, authorizes Texas craft breweries to sell beer to consumers for off-premise consumption, which is a privilege the state already provides to wineries, distilleries and brewpubs in Texas. Extending this right to breweries will help grow small businesses, increase consumer choice, and create more quality manufacturing jobs for Texans.

**SB 597\*** prevents an appraisal district or an appraisal review board from requiring a property owner to pay a fee when protesting the value of their property.

**SB 598\*** prevents the value of property from being increased during a protest hearing in assessments without consent of the property owner.

**SB 604** the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Sunset bill, makes several statutory changes to improve agency efficiency, reduce unnecessary regulation, and eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within the state's vehicle title and registration system.

**SB 615**, the Texas Windstorm Insurance Association Sunset bill, makes several reforms intended to increase agency efficiency and effectiveness, improve customer service, and decrease costs to policyholders.

**SB 669** sets the date to hold the confirmation election for the Southwestern Travis County Groundwater Conservation District as the uniform election date of November 2019.

**SB 670** removes barriers preventing the use of telemedicine in Medicaid, allows the use of telemedicine and telepharmacy at Federally Qualified Health Centers, ensures coordination of care across providers, and prevents Managed Care Organizations from denying reimbursement based solely on type of telemedicine platform used to deliver services.

**SB 1147** expands the community supervision treatment options to include Medical-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for certain individuals convicted of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**SB 1189** prohibits intentionally misleading advertisements for legal services in order to protect vulnerable Texans against potential health risks associated with the false information presented in these advertisements.

**SB 1234** will allow the Kerrville State Hospital and other state hospitals to operate more efficiently through the establishment of reciprocal relationships with other public entities, including the VA.

**SB 1378** requires proposed new medical schools to submit plans to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board based on the school's anticipated target maximum class size, rather than the anticipated inaugural class size.

**SB 1405\*** adds the City of Fredericksburg to an existing authority held by other communities that allows certain hotel occupancy tax revenues to be retained locally and reinvested back into economic development projects.

**SB 1407\*** adds the City of Kerrville to an existing authority held by other communities that allows certain hotel occupancy tax revenues to be retained locally and reinvested back into important economic development projects.

**SB 1666\*** will help Texans living in medically underserved areas have increased access to pharmacy services through the use of telepharmacy and improve patient access to lifesaving medications.

**SB 1991** improves the state's implementation of the Electronic Visit Verification system in order to reduce administrative burdens on providers and ensure compliance with the federal 21st Century Cures Act.

**SB 2011** instructs the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to partner with institutions of higher education, the Texas Medical Board, and the Texas Board of Nursing to conduct a study relating to the feasibility of developing a pilot program of creating a nurses to physician bridge program.

**SB 2024** designates Interstate Highway 35 between mile marker 294 and mile marker 297 in Bell County as the Trooper Tom Nipper Memorial Highway in honor of Trooper Nipper, who passed away in the line of duty in 2017.

**SB 2156** designates Interstate Highway 14 in Bell County as the First Cavalry Division Veterans Highway. The First Cavalry is based at Fort Hood and has served in and played an integral role in every war and overseas military operation since World War II.

**HB 23** honors the life of service by Officer Rodney T. Holder of Abilene, who passed away in the line of duty, by designating a portion of State Loop 322 in Taylor County as the Officer Rodney T. Holder Memorial Highway.

**HB 452** authorizes the Commissioners Court of Bell County to select masters to serve the county's justice courts having jurisdiction in truancy matters and will help alleviate the current case load of truancy cases.

**HB 531** extends the time hospitals and physicians are required to retain certain medical records obtain during a forensic medical examination of a sexual assault victim from 10 to 20 years to help ensure victims of sexual assault are afforded their right to due process as their cases work through the criminal justice system.

**HB 807** makes changes to the state water planning process to facilitate better cooperation and smarter planning among our 16 regional water planning groups.

**HB 1063** helps improve patient outcomes and contain healthcare costs through continuing the use of telemonitoring in Texas Medicaid and will also allow children diagnosed with an end-stage solid organ disease, received an organ transplant, or require mechanical ventilation to receive care in the comfort of their own homes through the use telemonitoring services.

**HB 1142** grants Taylor County the option to establish a Local Provider Participation Fund, or LPPF, to allow Taylor County to draw down federal dollars to address community health care needs without burdening local taxpayers or requiring any additional state dollars.

**HB 1422** continues the Texas Historical Commission (THC) until 2031, transfers six historic sites from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) to THC, establishes the Heritage Trails program in statute, and aligns certain statutory requirements with industry best practices.

**HB 1455** protects independent pharmacies in Texas from overreaching audit practices by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) attempting to unnecessarily penalize these small businesses for legitimate claims.

**HB 1523**, the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying Sunset bill, transfers the regulation of land surveyors to the Texas Board of Professional Engineers, creating a newly combined Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors.

**HB 1537** changes the Elm Creek Watershed Authority's board elections to staggered, four-year terms to be held in odd-numbered years.

**HB 1576** will help provide Texans who rely on the state's medical transportation program with greater access to reliable service options through the creation of a nonemergency medical transportation pilot program utilizing Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft.

**HB 1584** will help patients with stage-four, metastatic cancer to access the most appropriate life-saving treatments without unnecessary administrative delays caused by step therapy protocols.

**HB 1597** allows military families to establish residency in a school district for the purposes of advanced enrollment of their child upon receipt of valid military orders assigning them to a nearby military installation.

**HB 1848** will improve infection prevention control programs at long-term care facilities in order to prevent outbreaks of potentially fatal multi-drug-resistant organisms (MDROs), flu, and other infectious diseases.

**HB 2039** will allow Texas Department of Motor Vehicles to issue specialty license plates for the persons awarded the prestigious Master Army Aviator Badge, which is awarded to an individual who has successfully performed 15 years on flight status in a principal duty assignment.

**HB 2105** expands the Bell County Water Control and Improvement District 1 board of directors from four to seven members to represent the addition of territory and give representation on the board for all customers.

**HB 2205** creates more fairness and regulatory certainty in the informal resolution process between long-term care facilities and the Health and Human Services Commission.

**HB 2243** allows each public school district, open-enrollment charter school, or private school to adopt a policy authorizing a school nurse to maintain and administer asthma medication.

**HB 2327\*** improves patient access to timely treatment options by enhancing the transparency and communication between health plans and providers regarding prior authorization requirements and utilization review practices.

**HB 2439** prevents local governments from adopting ordinances that mandate the use of vendor-specific construction materials while limiting the use of construction materials that meet or exceed international safety code standards, as these type of regulations restrict consumer choice, drive up housing costs, and cut off access to affordable housing options for Texas families.

**HB 2496** reforms the local historical designation process and strengthens protections for property owners by creating a uniform process by which local municipalities can designate a property as historic.

**HB 2783** creates an advisory council to investigate how to best meet the needs of children who suffer from PANDAS and PANS will support families in their search for appropriate medical and educational care, as well as reduce the long-term fiscal cost to the state of Texas.

**HB 3041** will help address unnecessary gaps in patient care by establishing a renewal process by which providers could request to renew a preauthorization before it expires.

**HB 3329** affords assisted living facility providers with regulatory certainty and gives residents greater choice and flexibility in their living decisions by allowing assisted living communities to perform Health Maintenance Activities (HMAs) as defined by the Texas Board of Nursing

**HB 4669** creates the Northeast Burnet County Water District No. 1 subject to municipal consent and voter approval at a confirmation election.

**Other bills:** SB 683, SB 790, SB 1258, HB 356, HB 1264, HB 2894, HB 2971, HB 3304, HB 3531, HB 3655

\* Passed as part of another bill



# Useful State Government Toll-free Numbers



Information and Referral Hotline .....211	Department of Public Safety	Texas Medical Board <i>Complaints</i> .....(800) 201-9353
Secretary of State	Concealed Handgun Licenses .....(800) 224-5744	Board of Dental Examiners
Voter Information .....(800) 252.VOTE (8683)	Driver's Licenses .....(512) 424-2600	Complaints .....(800) 821-3205
Office of the Attorney General	Surcharges, Driver Responsibility	Lawyer Referral Service of Central Texas...(512) 472-8303
Child Support Division .....(800) 252-8014	Program .....(512) 424-2600	Texas Legal Services Center.....(800) 622-2520
Consumer Protection .....(800) 621-0508	Texas Veterans Commission	Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid .....(956) 447-4800
Public Information/Open Records .....(877) 673-6839	Veterans Hotline .....(800) 252-8387	State Bar of Texas
Texas Workforce Commission	Dept. of Aging & Disability Services	Complaints against your lawyer ...(800) 932-1900
Unemployment and Workforce Solutions...(800) 832-2829	Office of Consumer Rights and Services...(800) 458-9858	Texas State Law Library
Mortgage & Foreclosure Assistance	Dept. of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services	Reference Desk .....(512) 463-1722
Texas Department of Housing and	Services Information Hotline .....(800) 628-5115	Public Utility Commission
Community Affairs .....(800) 792-1119	Dept. of State Health Services	Utility Complaints (electric and
Tx. Dept. of Savings and Mortgage Lending...(877) 276-5550	Complaint Hotline .....(888) 973-0022	telephone service).....(888) 782-8477
Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner...(800) 5381579	Information and Referral Hotline .....(888) 963-7111	Texas Railroad Commission
Texas Department of Insurance	Teacher Retirement System	Gas Utility Complaints .....(512) 463-7164
Workers' Compensation Hotline .....(800) 252-7031	Telephone Counseling Center .....(800) 223-8778	Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Office of Injured Employee Counsel .....(866) 393-6432	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	Energy Assistance .....(877) 399-8939
Consumer Helpline/ File a Complaint .....(800) 252-3439	Public Assistance Hotline .....(800) 687-4040	Weatherization Assistance .....(888) 606-8889
Department of Family and Protective Services	Environmental Complaints .....(888) 777-3186	Texas Dept. of Motor Vehicles
Texas Abuse/Neglect Hotline .....(800) 252-5400	Alcoholic Beverage Commission	Information Hotline .....(888) 368-4689
Foster Care and Adoption Information .....(800) 233-3405	Reporting Alcohol-Related Violations...(888) 843-8222	Complaints Against Vehicle Dealers... (800) 687-7846
Texas Youth & Runaway Hotline .....(800) 989-6884	Texas Real Estate Commission	Texas Dept. of Transportation
	Complaints .....(512) 936-3005	Information Line (800) 558-9368

## TEXAS STATE SENATOR

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### Kerrville District Office

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